THE PORT FOLIO.

ENLARGED.

BY OLIVER OLDSCHOOL, ESQ.

"VARIOUS, THAT THE MIND
OF DESULTORY MAN, STUDIOUS OF CHANGE,
AND PLEAS'D WITH NOVELTY, MAY BE INDULGED."
COWPER.

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ORIGINAL PAPERS.

FOR THE PORT FOLIO.

THE AMERICAN LOUNGER.

BY SAMUEL SAUNTER, ESQ.

No. LXXIV.

AMONG the candidates for literary distinction, there is no truth more frequently lost sight of, than that of the necessity of labour to qualify them for the eminence of which they are in pursuit. Indolence is always suggesting expedients for the postponement of exertion, we grow weary of toil when reward seems distant, and even among those, who commence their career with every determination to steady perseverance, ardour will often cool, and diligence relax. Sir Edward Coke, when entering upon the study of law, is said to have taken as his motto, '*Lex est tutissima cassis.*' By having this monitor constantly before him, he lived under the habitual impression of the high importance of his profession, and thereby lessened the danger of falling into self-indulgence. Those who are striving for literary exaltation, cannot be too often told how rugged and how cheerless is their way. They cannot be too frequently reminded by what slow degrees and repetitions of industry, excellence is conferred upon human productions.

It is a remark in physical creation, that plants flourish long, in proportion to the time they take in arriving at maturity, and among animals, those only are found to reach longevity that are of slow growth. It is the same in the moral world. Men, who are conspicuous for intellectual acquirements, become so by severe and unabating assiduity. The preceptor of Alexander, when his pupil complained of the difficulty of his task, told him '*there was no royal road to geometry.*' We are informed, in the Rambler, that 'Statius was the only author of antiquity who ventured to mention the speedy production of his writings, either as an extenuation of his faults, or as an evidence of his facility.' This is a very remarkable fact. It shews that among the ancients it was not only regarded as necessary, but that it was always expected the greatest labour would be bestowed upon all their compositions. As a proof of the high conceptions they had of the difficulty of good writing, we further learn from the source just referred to, that 'no man among them is recorded to have attempted more than one kind of dramatic poetry.' A limited survey of ancient biography will readily supply instances of the persevering diligence with which our ancestors arrived at eminence in their different pursuits.

Whenever a writer's performance has cost him no labour, he ought, on that very account, to question its merit. The first essays of the human mind are imbecile and unsatisfactory. When, upon an accidental animation of thought, a writer fills up his page with rapid execution, he finds, upon the fall of his excitement, much of confusion to clear up, and much of absurdity to expunge. The most exalted intelligencies do not claim an exception to this remark. It was a heathen saying, that the gods gave nothing to man without great labour. Productions that have been admired as the extemporaneous offspring of genius, have been the result of thoughts deep, painful, and continued. Poems that, from the easy flow of their numbers, have been thought to rise in the mind as easily, have been the effect of previous design, and systematic meditation. Perhaps there is no subject on which the desire to deceive is so general as on this. Doubt should always be awake when boast is made of the promptitude of the mind's performances. In the time of Charles the second, the Earl of Dorset wrote an admired song on the then expected conflict between the English and Dutch fleets. The Earl was on board one of the English ships, and as his poem came out on the night before the battle, it gained him every where the reputation of a ready wit. The biographer of the Earl relates, that he was informed by one likely to have good intelligence, a whole week had been employed upon this little cantata. There are many such rapid writers as the Earl of Dorset.

All the eminent moderns have risen to their heights by passing through probations of vigilance and of toil. Milton wrote his great work at an advanced period in life. He had long conceived the plan of it, but deferred the execution until study and mature years had enlarged and diversified his learning, shed before him new lights, and extended, to their utmost bound, the ranges of his mind. Pope wrote and corrected with the nicest care; he repressed publication until new beauties had accumulated, and new thoughts were supplied. The easy elegance of Hume was acquired by a studious disposition, and a long course of silent industry. A great part of Robertson's history is said to have been written in detached sentences on fragments of paper and the backs of letters. In the composition of a single page he has been known to walk the floor of his study half a day, labouring for expression, and tuning periods to his ear. Johnson's confessions tell how he felt the languor of application. Until the age of forty he was an unremitting and a solitary student, and after that period he gave to his labours only a partial relaxation. Junius, in stating his claims to public notice, asks 'and do these letters cost me nothing?' It was the most diligent application in early life, that gave to BURKE his various and profound erudition. In the course of a single speech, the moralist, the metaphysician, the antiquary, the poet, the statuary, the architect, and the general philosopher, all find he had toiled in their fields. And hear with what expedition he wrote! His celebrated work on the French revolution, was ten months in maturing. This was an octavo volume of less than three hundred pages. We have lately been told of the labour of Cowper at that metre, which has so simple and so inartificial a flow. But what shall be said of Gibbon? he whose mind, as himself acknowledges, was slow and deliberate, what were the achievements of his wonderful industry? Let the man who envies him the splendor of his page, go to his memoirs, and learn through what struggles it was acquired. The books that he read only as a preparative to a journey into Italy, would, in number, serve many for their journey through life.

Examples, like these, however familiar, cannot be too frequently brought into view: they give a fresh spring to the schemes of diligence, repress the vanities of the superficial, and hold out consolation to the sons of perseverance. They are the more proper in a country where elementary learning is uncommon, and where distinction is caught at without a compliance with the requisites it demands. There seems, in this respect, to be a connection in the United States between works of the mind, and the products of manual exertion. Most of our manufactures, owing to the imperfect and unseasoned materials of which they are composed, are found to want the durability of those we get from other countries. The artist who would give permanency to his labours, must employ in them materials that are well fitted for use, and he who seeks applause from mental attainments, must multiply his ideas, and become skilled in the arts of expression, by extensive and laborious research.

BIOGRAPHY.

THE LIFE OF WILLIAM WILKIE, D. D.

[Continued.]

Among the various analogies which the active fancy of man delights to trace between political and human bodies, there is none more striking than that similarity which is remarked between their different geniuses in the different stages of their existence. In youth, and in manhood, we look forward to some object which is to increase our happiness, and to raise our fame. Animated by such pleasing hopes, our spirits are lively, and our pursuits are active; but, in more advanced years, men turn back their attention to the more early period of their lives, and are fond of recollecting and relating the joys and the achievements of their youth. There is, in like manner, a time when nations look forward to future glory, when they are emulous to excel in every honourable enterprise, and are eager to strike out new paths in science and art. And there is also a time when, either through satiety or despair, they are more inclined to remember what has been, than to anticipate what shall be; when History becomes the favourite study, and is deemed the most entertaining subject, as well as the most useful object of human attention and reason. Such is the genius of our nation at the present moment. And this turn of the nation, coinciding with that ardour for literary fame, which, for more than forty years past, has distinguished the northern part of this island, has determined the most eminent Scottish writers to try their strength in the arduous attempt of history.

Had Wilkie been born and educated in the present reign, it is probable that he would have

courted the historic muse. But the general taste for poetry which prevailed when he received the first impressions of education, a sprightly and luxriant imagination, and the political motive, which has been already mentioned, conspired to raise his views to Parnassus. A few years before his birth, senators and statesmen were proud of writing verses; and a talent for poetry was considered as a requisite, as it was in reality a step to preferment in the offices of government. The princes, in whose reign he was born and educated, were not, indeed, patrons of the muses: but poetry continued to be in fashion. The translations of Pope had excited a general admiration of his own powers, and revived a veneration for those of Homer. Criticisms were written on the Epopiœa, and comparisons made between Homer, Virgil, Lucan, Camoens, Ariosto, Tasso, Milton, Voltaire, and Glover.

In such circumstances, Wilkie conceived the design of writing a poem after that great poet, whose praises were re-echoed throughout the world, and for whom he entertained the highest veneration. He drew the subject of his poem from the fourth book of the Iliad, where Sthenelus gives Agamemnon a short account of the sacking of Thebes. After the fall of those heroes celebrated by Statius, their sons, and, among the rest, Diomed, undertook the siege of that city, and were so fortunate as to succeed in their enterprise, and to revenge, on the Thebans and the tyrant Creon, the death of their fathers. These young heroes were known to the Greeks under the title of the Epigoni, or the Descendants; and, for this reason, Wilkie gave to his poem the title of the Epigoniad.

There remained a tradition among the Greeks, that Homer had taken this second siege of Thebes for the subject of a second poem, which is lost; and Wilkie seems to have pleased himself with the thoughts of reviving the work, as well as of treading in the steps of his favourite author.

The principles upon which, as a Christian, and a philosopher, in an age which rejects ancient fable, as wholly incredible, he engaged in an undertaking, the nature of which was intimately connected with ancient mythology, may be collected from the following eulogium on the influence of poetry, more particularly that species of poetry which supposes the truth of heathen fables, pronounced in conversation with Dr. Thomson, many years after, in the Earl of Kinnoul's library, at Dupplin Castle, which, though long, is too valuable to be withheld.

'There cannot be a more proper amusement for a person whose office it is to humanise the mind by inculcating the Christian graces and virtues than the poets. All literature has a tendency to purify the mind from disingenuity and brutality, by habituating it to the contemplation of truth, in contradistinction to falsehood and error; of fitness and propriety, as distinguished from what is incongruous, monstrous, and absurd; and of human nature placed in situations fitted to excite our sympathetic feelings, and to exercise our noble and virtuous emotions and passions. It is in this last manner, it is by a constant appeal to our moral feelings, that poetry, especially the sublimer kinds of poetry, wears off the antipathies of the barbarian, and disposes the man of letters and taste, in the intercourse of life, to overlook many causes of animosity and resentment, and to sympathise with human nature in the midst of a thousand frailties and follies. By the sublime kinds of poetry, I understand the ode, tragedy, and epopœa: these not only recommend whatever is excellent and great in human conduct, to the cool and dispassionate views of reason, but powerfully impress it on the heart, and gradually incorporate it with the moral character. In human events and actions there is a sameness which cloys, and an imperfection which displeases the mind. Heroic or epic poetry remedies these defects, by exhibiting a picture as various as the wanderings of the imagination, and examples of virtue, that correspond to those abstracted ideas of excellence that are formed by the intellect, and which alone come up to the desires of the soul. Although the whole of a composition of this kind abounds in grave instructions, yet there is one lesson which is taught above all others, one truth which it principally inculcates, and which is called the moral of the poem. This truth or moral is illustrated by a story or fable; and as the heroic poet does not shoot directly and rapidly towards the end he has in view, but, on the contrary, keeps long on the wing, and aims, in his flight, to warm the mind, and to gratify its vast desires by frequent views of the grandeur, magnificence, and beauty of nature. This fable, story, or plot, various and intricate in itself, is still farther diversified by manifold incidents and digressions; various scenes are opened, various actors introduced, various characters and manners, and, corresponding to these, various sentiments. The variety and gravity of the diction are suited to the variety and gravity of the subject; and musical numbers, with beautiful imagery, adorn every part of the complicated production.'

'He illustrated the truth of these sentiments,' says Dr. Thomson, by whom the conversation is reported, 'from the works of Tasso and of Milton, but chiefly from the Iliad of Homer. I mentioned the incredibility of Homer's fables, and hinted that they were scarcely proper for the contemplation of a Christian. On this head I was not myself very scrupulous, being convinced, that, to suffer the imagination to wander, for a time, over the fields of fancy, is no crime. It is easy to call back the wanderer, and to dismiss the illusion: but I wished to draw an answer from Wilkie. With respect to the incredibility of fable, the imagination, he answered, can render any thing credible, if it is well described, that is not absurd or impossible. As to the unchristianness of attending to heathen fables, he said that there were many fables in the Bible, introduced for the express purpose of conveying and inculcating truths, religious and moral. Many of the heathen fables, he maintained, had, in like manner, a moral tendency: for example, the furious Achilles and Diomed are about to vent their rage in some act of cruelty and injustice. Minerva presents herself in some form or other that they respect, and diverts their purpose. That is, the voice of reason restrains the impetuosity of passion.'

The differences of time and place had no effect upon Wilkie's genius. While he cultivated the ground, his poem of The Epigoniad was going forward; and, with the scythe in his hand, he meditated on the times when princes and heroes boasted of their powers and skill, in cutting hay, ploughing land, and feeding swine. The rural scenes and simple manners that were ever present in his imagination, accorded well with the tone of a poem, the subject of which was taken from a very early period of society, and contributed to give a justness and exactness to his images, which are not to be found in the compositions of city poets, who draw little from nature, and take every thing at second hand.

It was reported, that while he was writing the Epigoniad, it is said, he read it in pieces to an old woman, in the neighbourhood, named Margaret Paton, without communicating to any other person what he was doing; and what she disapproved of, he scored and altered, till pure nature was pleased. A similar story is told of Moliere, with more probability. There is a tradition, also that, upon some occasion, he submitted his verses to the correction of Mr. Hume. Mr. Hume addressed Wilkie, by telling him, that he had made a great many emendations. Wilkie, upon looking slightly at them, replied: 'well, I will be even with you; for I will not adopt so much as one of your corrections.'

His manner of life at the Fisher's Tryste was the most respectable that could be imagined. He prosecuted his literary studies, he tilled the ground, employed the poor, provided for his sisters, and on Sundays occasionally preached the gospel. This, indeed, was no hardship to him; for so general was his knowledge, so lively his imagination, and so quick his recollection, that he preached not only without writing his sermons, but sometimes even without longer premeditation than that of eight or ten minutes. He went one day to hear sermon in the church of Ratho, and, as he walked along with the minister from the manse to the church, was closely pressed by him to preach for him. He at first made many excuses, but was so extremely urged, that he at last consented, provided the minister would name the text; a condition which was readily complied with. This anecdote is related by Dr. Thomson, who was told by a nobleman who was present, and who was a good judge, that the sermon was excellent.

In the rebellion of 1745, a generous start of loyal fervour had excited the young people about Edinburgh, many of them Wilkie's companions, to take the field: but the absurdity of risking the flower of the country made it soon be over-ruled; and Wilkie was remarked to have been the only person who left the ranks: hence insinuations against his personal courage. Perhaps he saw the foolishness of the thing: at least there are no other evidences of this kind against him; and it is certain, that being once dogged by a footpad, in a dark night, on his way to Ratho, he turned upon him, and, with one blow of his cane across the temples, brought him to the ground. This anecdote is related upon the authority of Dr. Robertson.

After the close of the rebellion, and the restoration of the peace of the country, he returned to his farm, and resumed the quiet occupations of agriculture and literature, in which he spent several years, little known to the world, and holding little intercourse with it, excepting with a few literary friends and companions.

The Fisher's Tryste, lying in the immediate vicinity of Gorgie, the property of Mr. Lind, sheriff-substitute of Mid-Lothian, he became acquainted with Wilkie at an early period, and, from their first acquaintance, strongly attached him to his interests.

Mr. Lind was very capable of discerning his merit, gave him a general invitation to his house, introduced him into the company of his numerous acquaintance, and made him known to the Duke of Argyll, the Earl of Lauderdale, Lord Milton, Lord Kames, Mr. Charles Townshend, and many other persons of rank.

In 1752, Mr. Guthrie, minister of Ratho, being rendered incapable, by age and infirmities, of discharging the duties of his office, an assistant was found necessary. Mr. Lind recommended Wilkie to the Earl of Lauderdale, the patron of that parish, for that office, and obtained his Lordship's consent to allow him to preach at Ratho.

When Wilkie was introduced at Hatton, Lord Lauderdale was much pleased with the originality of his genius and extensive knowledge; and so much entertained with a thousand peculiarities in his manner of thinking and reasoning on every subject, that he resolved immediately to make him assistant and successor to Mr. Guthrie;

and for this purpose, he generously established a fund of 30*l.* for his annual support, without diminishing the stipend during the life of the old man.

[*To be Continued.*]

MISCELLANY.

Quo, Musa, tendis?

My constant attention to the various descriptions of characters into which mankind distribute themselves, has brought me acquainted with several smaller classes and subdivisions, which pass unobserved by those who watch these diversities less narrowly than myself. In my profession of a Looker-on, there is a skill in classing and arranging not unlike that which is expected from the botanist in the detail of his particular science. It will often happen, that a curious individual among men, like a rare specimen among plants, will pass for a non-descript with those who have pushed their researches to but a moderate extent; while others, who have prosecuted their inquiries with greater accuracy and ardour, and have taken richer and wider views of their subject, will have no dificulty, for the most part, in referring to some separate division each fresh particular, and gaining a property in their new discoveries, by thus bringing them within a sort of enclosure.

In the course of my observations, there have started up in my way a set of men who are occupied through all the prime part of their lives in hunting after their own genius without success; who, with unwearied pertinacity, are forcing their faculties into every channel but the right, and, after torturing their minds a thousand ways, yield to the depression of constant disappointment, and sink into barren despondency, or the ruinous resources of vulgar dissipation. Those who are without the restlessness of ambition, or the promptitude of talents, may easily find their proper level, and have only to live in harmless inoccupation, or toil under the directions of an active task-maker: but such as feel a consciousness of ability, and a spirit to exert it, have a strong interest in discovering the employment most congenial to their characters, and proportionate to their capacities. Under this latter description the greatest part of us most certainly may rank; for, happily, the instances are not common, wherein nature has sent mere blanks into life, of which no application can be made to the general advantage; and I am apt to think that many of the least gifted amongst us, have fire enough within us to yield a spark, if our destiny do but bring us into collision with the proper object.

I remember, about five and thirty years ago, at college, a youth of a fair face, a plump condition, and a vivacity of deportment, who was most sanguinely bent upon discovering that particular spot in the whole range of human excellence, which nature had designed him to illuminate, and where his genius might claim a sort of home and inheritance. Dick Addle, without being obliged to Plato, had accidentally fallen upon the ancient doctrine of reminiscence; and it was a blind opinion of his, that if we could but hit upon the pursuit that corresponded with the stress and tendency of our genius we should have little else to do but to exert the faculty of memory in resuming those ideas which had been given us at our births, and which only needed to encounter their congenial objects to be summoned into life and activity.

Dick set out on his discoveries with amazing ardour, and proceeded with uncommon perseverance; all the ocean of his intellect was sailed over, and its shallows ascertained with plummet and line; but Dick saw nothing but a barren sea a πολος ατεγγετος: and still, as he urged his course, there was opened before him a wider and more disconsolate expanse of sullen uniformity. I used to pity this young gentleman very much, on the accounnt of his repeated failures; and could not help lamenting that so much good meaning should meet with so much ill luck.

But Dick was indefatigable in his endeavours: sometimes he was an author, sometimes a patron, sometimes a politician, sometimes a jester, sometimes a philosopher, and sometimes a fidler; now a magistrate, now a mechanic, an antiquary, an algebraist, an astrologer; but all would not do; for before Dick had got half through with his metamorphoses and experiments, he was robbed, ridiculed, cheated, cuffed, lampooned, posted, pelted, roasted, cut up, tossed in a blanket, and so often kicked, that, as we read in Hudibras, he rose at last to such nicety of discrimination, as to tell, by his sensations alone, the difference between Spanish and neat's leather.

Under all these trials and defeats, Dick's face grew longer, and his purse shorter every day; till, by one of the luckiest accidents in the world, Dick married a wife, and at the end of three years being the father of five rosy children, he appeared every where with the most smiling and contented face in the world; declaring to all his friends, that his pains were at least rewarded, by the discovery of his particular talent, which lay, as was proved, in supplying the community with healthy children, and in teaching them to ride on broomsticks.

Not all the gravity, however, of his more consequential situation in life, could ever banish from the memories of his college-acquaintance, the ridiculous name that was given to him, of doubting Dicky. I am informed too, that his original character has frequently discovered itself afresh, in the embarrassment he has laboured under in the disposal of his children; and that his eldest son, after being drubbed as a wit, thrown into a ditch in the character of a fox-hunter, and cashiered as a soldier, was, about a month ago, with great difficulty recovered from drowning by the process of the Humane Society, after courageously setting the Thames at defiance with his diving-bell and balloon, in the character of a modern philosopher.

I beg leave to follow up this account of poor Dick Addle, with a rule that may perhaps be serviceable to those who may happen to find themselves in a similar distress. Let such as doubt, like Dick, of their proper destination, make choice at once of some humble handicraft employment, in which there is little risk to themselves, and a sure profit to the community. In these unambitious walks of life, a failure can terminate in no consequential evils; while on the contrary, the unsuccessful trials which are every day made in the provinces of genius and taste, spread wide and deep their mischievous effects, and leave lasting impressions of injury and discredit.

I have no doubt but that society must gain greatly by the general adoption of such a rule as I have laid down; for where it loses one man of real genius, it will escape a score of pretenders. Besides which, perhaps it would be found, that out of the mass of mechanical industry, into which I would throw all these hesitating gentlemen, the more subtle and volatile parts would rise with a chemical alacrity, and leave behind them the heavier and solider substances, to occupy their natural places in the order of life.

One of my ancestors, among other odd particulars, has left us a list of the accidental discoveries which his different acquaintance have made of their own talents, and the occasions of those discoveries, a few articles of which I will lay before my readers. His motto is,

——*Plus enim fati valet hora benigni*
Quam te Ve eris commendet epistola Marti.

'Try all you can, by int'rest, love, or letter;
'A lucky hit will do your business better.'

11th of March, 1672.—Sam Stunt, happening to put himself into a pair of scales in the course of some experiments on the effects of air on the human body, discovered himself to be the exact weight for a horse; and instead of a ridiculous philosopher, is become a very learned jockey.

1st of April.—Tom Hardcastle, in endeavouring to be witty this day on all mankind, found he did better as a butt, and has since served in that capacity, to the great entertainment of his friends.

4th of June.—Ned Spare-rib began to walk the hospital this day, and convinced himself and the world, before night, that nature had designed him for a carcase-butcher.

17th of August.—Will Cross-stick, who had written several pamphlets, and much treason, without turning a penny, as he was whistling out his meditations, saw a rusty razor laying on the road: his genius took fire at the omen, and he is since become a topping barber.

2d of September.—Jack Parsnip, who had begun his career as a parish-officer, and had since stepped forward as a great politician, being pursued hard by the bailiffs, hid himself in a dung-cart: his genius for gardening began immediately to make great shoots; and the best melons in the county are now of his raising.

4th of November.—Bob Smirk, after following the business of an attorney without success for many years, found out his talent for mimicry as he followed a rich uncle to the grave.

1st of December.—Ben Bodkin was a fellow of sprightly parts; he felt conscious of a genius for something, but he did not know what; he tried various callings and occupations, till, being hired at the theatre to assist in the procession in the tragedy of Alexander the Great, he scraped acquaintance with a journeyman tailor: his genius developed itself in a moment; and before Alexander could well get into Babylon, he drew a pair of scissars from his pocket, and made a desperate effort to cabbage the skirt of his royal mantle. I am told that at this day there is nothing in the whole trade so capital as the cut of Ben Bodkin's coats.

24th of December.—As Bob Furbish was turning the corner of a street, his hat was blown off into an auctioneer's pulpit: he followed it close, and mounted the rostrum just as they began to bid for it. The moment he saw the crowd below him, the workings of his mind were prodigious; he declared himself inspired, and hurried down without his hat: the next day he entered into the profession; and no man handles the hammer like Bob Furbish at this hour.

2d of January, 1673.—Paul Puff had acted as pedlar, puppetshow-man, and quack-doctor, till, being tempted on the evening of this day to take a hot mutton-pye in exchange for a box of pills, all the pastry-cook was lighted up in his soul, and his shop is now the most considerable in the city.

But I must drop these drolleries in order to leave room for the following letter.

'SIR,

'I am a constant reader of the *Looker-on*, and confess I am pleased with your manner of treating those diseases of the mind which have fallen under your contemplation. I have not yet however had the good fortune to find in it a sufficient

remedy for my own. In order therefore that my case may be taken into consideration, I will give you as accurate an account as I can, both of the symptoms of the complaint, and of the methods I have used towards its cure, requesting that whatever may appear to promise relief to your ditressed patient, may be published in your paper as soon as possible.

'I am a bachelor of about fifty years of age, and am a prey to a passion that consumes me. I can rest neither night nor day for the rage I feel for authorship, and the honours of genius; the trophies of some Miltiades or other are for ever disturbing my peace. How early this passion got possession of my mind, I cannot accurately inform you; but to the best of my remembrance I perceived the first intrusions of it about fifteen years ago, when I was admitted a member of the Royal Society. My whole distress arises from my inability to discover whether I am a man of genius or not. This is a discovery which I am extremely anxious to make, before I either entirely resign the thoughts of becoming an author, or determine to enter upon this toilsome career.

'Various are the means which I have pursued, and laborious are the researches which I have made, to convince myself of a truth so necessary to the establishment of my peace or the increase of my fame: among others, I collect from all quarters the lives and anecdotes of great men; and according as I find a similarity between their habits and my own, I judge of the extent of my capacity. The consequence of this is, that when I discover in myself a congeniality of thought, or coincidence of behaviour with them, I am elated above measure, consider such an agreement as an undoubted proof of the superiority of my genius, and feel my soul expand with secret assurances of immortality on earth; but if no points of similitude discover themselves, I am thrown at once into despondency, and feel myself sinking to the level of those who have lain long forgotten in their tombs. As I look upon superiority of genius to be the highest felicity here below, and dulness as a terrible visitation, my mind is continually bandied between hope and despair, dejection and pride.

'All the night before last I passed in waking dreams of greatness, occasioned by my having somewhere read, that after the ordinary attendance at college, the great John Locke had, like myself, been judged unqualified to take his degrees. But this happiness was only of a night's duration: in the morning my hopes were at once blasted by reading in Plutarch's Lives, that Cæsar was afflicted with an epilepsy; a disorder from which I unfortunately found myself free. The melancholy impressions produced by this discovery were very soon removed by overhearing my landlady tell one of her neighbours, that during the paroxysms of a violent fever I had acted as Dean Swift used to do in his periodical fits.

'My manners also are as variable as my happiness is uncertain; for when I can detect no traces of similitude between my ordinary habits, and those of the great man whose life I am reading, I take violent pains to accommodate myself to the model I so much admire. I have suffered, however, greatly in the course of this laudable ambition; for having heard that Ben Johnson used commonly to write without his coat, forgetting to inquire at what time of the year, I sat at my desk all January last in my doublet and hose till I caught a rheumatism that nearly cost me my life. Hence the different lives I read have as great effect upon my conduct as the passions of the camelion upon the colour of its body. At one time I am silent and sober, like Addison; at another, convivial and loquacious, like Steele: this day I assume the sternness and incivility of Johnson; again, I am all submission, like Gay; now, I am proud and imperious, like Swift; then, like Thomson, modest and unassuming: in short, I constantly carry along with me the spirit of the author whose life I am perusing.

'In the pursuit of this great object of my life, I have often pushed my inquiries very far into the profundity of natural causes, but have been as unsuccessful in this, as in my other attempts. My escapes, however, from a total discovery of dulness on the one hand, and my disappointments in not attaining to a complete confirmation of my ingenuity on the other, have been narrow and numerous. All hopes of immortalising my name were lately almost entirely cut off, by reading an account of giants and pygmies in Goldsmith's Natural History. Here, in opposition to my favourite theory, that the minds of men are great in proportion to the size of their bodies, that author attempts to prove, that the middle stature is best fitted to nourish intellectual powers; and that any great deviation from this size, whether above or below it, argues in general an imbecillity of intellect.

'I was more than relieved from the depression of mind, occasioned by this senseless theory, when I found that Fenton the poet was six feet two inches high, which is precisely my size. I recovered from a similar dejection, that arose from reading somewhere that the powers of the mind begin to decay from the age to which mine is approaching; when I recollected that Milton was older than I am when he began his Paradise Lost.

'But the question which has given me the greatest trouble to investigate, is, whether my head be of that particular shape which is necessary to constitute a man of genius. I have been the more intent upon this object, as I thought it offered the most promising appearance of a complete demonstration. Lavater I have perused with great attention, as also a number of other famous physiognomists; but though I do not suppose myself deficient in point of mathematical genius, I had never been able to perform the mensuration according to the rules they lay down.

'I would recommend it, as well worthy the attention of some person who has arrived at a due estimate of his abilities by the aid of this criterion, to construct a machine of such a nature, that upon its admitting or excluding the head, the extent or weakness of the capacity may be ascertained without further trouble. I should consider it too as a great improvement of such a machine, if, since some are fitted by nature to excel in one branch of literature, and some in another, it could have the additional property of pointing out a direction of our talents conformably to the design of nature.

'This would be one of the most solid inventions with which the genius of man has yet been inspired. Its utility would diffuse itself over all professions, trades, and degrees; agriculture would recover her sons, of which the pulpit, the bar, and the senate, had robbed her; and many a Cincinnatus would be recalled from the plough to the bench and the cabinet. I cannot help being surprised, that in this age, in which a spirit for the improvement in manufactures and agriculture so much prevails, and has been so successfully cultivated, an invention of this kind should never have been attempted, which must tend so powerfully to facilitate labour, by distributing it in such due proportions, and with such just appropriations and appointments.

'I shall conclude my application to you with suggesting, that as there are probably a numerous class of men who sympathise exactly with me in the case which I have submitted to you, a particular attention to my complaint may be of public service, and will greatly console

'Your distressed and obedient humble Servant,

'WILL WHETHERALL.'

THE FINE ARTS.

ROYAL ACADEMY.

The Patrons and Friends of this excellent Institution were, on Saturday, admitted to inspect the productions of the different Artists, previous to the opening of the Exhibition for public view. The visitors were highly distinguished for rank and talents. Among them were—the Archbishop of York, the Duke of Norfolk, the Marquis of Thomond; Earls Spencer, Camden, Darnley, Carlisle; Lords Rosslyn, Hawkesbury, Alvanley; Baron de Nollekin, General Andreossi, and we think all the Foreign Ministers, without an exception; Sirs Joseph Banks, G. Beaumont, A. Hume; Messrs. Fox, Windham, C. Long, J. J. Angerstein, Grey, Wilberforce, Whitbread, Banks, Knight, Desenfans, Malone, Andrews, Penn, Dance, &c. &c. &c. After the inspection, the Academicians and Associates gave their Annual Dinner, which, very properly, was more remarkable for neatness and elegance, than for sumptuousness and profusion.

Of this year's Exhibition, it may be fairly said, that if there be no extraordinary display of genius, the whole evinces more judgment and taste, in composition, colouring, and all the articles of detail belonging to the art which mark the progress of improvement, and conduct, by attention and industry, its professors to a state of refinement, than that of last season. We have, however, to lament, that Portraits constitute its prominent character, while the historical department, the grand source of celebrity, seems evidently to be less cultivated every year. To what cause this falling off is to be attributed, we are at loss to decide; but if our native Artists do not receive encouragement from the great and opulent, they surely cannot be censured for preferring profit to fame, more particularly when some of them are hunted closely at the heels by want, that 'hungry, meagre fiend.' In vain will the public look for those prodigies of genius, those *chef d'œuvres*, which have immortalized a Raphael, a Correggio, a Titian, a Rubens, and a Poussin, while merit, however praised, is allowed to starve. The possessor of it, in such a case, feels no incitement to work for posterity; he naturally turns his thoughts to other objects, and other means, and he finds in the *vanity*, not only of the rich and powerful, but even of the middling and the mechanic classes of society, remuneration for his labours, at once liberal and expeditious.

To this fondness for personal and family likenesses, may be perhaps traced the discouragement which genius receives in its pursuit of what may not only contribute to the honour of the Artist who is capable of exercising it, but give to his country a superiority which every man attached to his native soil must delight in.

In the present Exhibition, we may justly say there is nothing to astonish or to enrapture the spectator. We do not feel that the painter, like the poet, can transport us to distant regions; or make us, as has been humorously observed by Voltaire, live centuries before we were born, by the magic touch of his pencil. There is not, in truth, a single production, of whose author we can assert—

'Et modo Thebis, modo me ponit Athenis.'

There is indeed study, labour, judgment, and, in many instances, composition and distribution; but we look in vain for the magnificent flights of imagination, for the grandeur of design, for the exquitite glow of tint, for those superb masses of

light and shade that have raised the art to its present dignity.

To enter, in the slight sketch we propose to give, into the merits of all the exhibitors, would be a task impossible for us to fulfil; and we shall therefore confine ourselves to a notice of those pieces more peculiarly calculated to arrest the attention of the visitor.

The President, Mr. West, has this year been less on the alert, than on any former occasion. He has not furnished, in any of the principal branches, a single picture. We regret this the more, as his small productions, whatever difference of opinion has existed with respect to those upon a large scale, have been always, and justly, the theme of critical panegyric.

Among the Artists, the names of Sir William Beechey, Opie, Lawrence, Hoppner, Copley, Sir Francis Bourgeois, Northcote, Turner, Westall, and Shee, hold the most distinguished rank.

In the family group of Beechey, there is truth of design and force of colouring. It is placed in the centre of the great room, and is one of his very best works.

Opie has finished a Piece, 'Cloathing the Naked,' in a style which gives him a superiority over his fellow Artists in the historical department. It is marked with boldness in the execution, and the idea is finely conceived and expressed. His picture of Mr. Adam, the Barrister, is a happy resemblance.

Lawrence contributes several pleasing and animated portraits. His best are, Lady C. Campbell, Lord Thurlow, and Mr. Windham; but the first surpasses all the others in felicity of execution.

Hoppners' Lady Mildmay and Child must stand the test of the most rigid criticism; and although no very considerable improvements in this line could be expected from his pencil, he has certainly, in this instance, outdone his former exertions.

Copley's Lord Northampton and Son, are admirable; and the pencil of Sir Francis Bourgeois has never displayed itself to more advantage.

In the productions of Northcote, we see labour; but he does not evince what he has formerly shewn he possessed, genius or richness of stile.

Turner merely sustains his reputation, but does not increase it. His Landscapes are ideal, yet are not, therefore, the less natural; but his attempt in giving a 'Holy Family' we cannot commend. The grouping is destitute of that consummate judgment which a first artist should possess, and his colouring is either faint, or too glaringly finished.

The drawings of Westall are exquisite. This is a branch in which he stands unrivalled, but who has seen his former painting of 'Moses placed in the bull-rushes by his mother,' that will not allow the inferiority of his present picture in oil, on the same subject?

Shee has, undoubtedly, added very much to his reputation by his exhibitions of this year. His whole length of the celebrated Irish preacher, Mr. Kirwan, is the finest likeness we have seen for several years; and his picture of Mrs. Pope, the actress, has to boast fidelity of resemblance and elegance of finishing,

Ashby has several portraits of merit.

We cannot speak very favourably of Fuseli's historical production, from a fragment of Æschylus. There is an extravagance of fancy in it, which no execution can reconcile to true taste.

In dramatic delineation De Wilde continues without a rival. His portrait of Farley, in the Tale of Mystery, combines every desideratum of the art.

Among the crayon pictures, those by Russel and J. Smith take the lead. The latter has succeeded in giving an excellent whole length likeness of general Andreossi.

A small picture, by Stothard, 'The Rival Ladies,' from *The Spectator*, has great merit.

Thomson deserves great credit for his picture entitled 'Crossing the Brook.'

Owen has a very good portrait of an Officer with a horse, whole length.

In the Sculptural and Architectural departments, we have several good models, busts, and designs.

We cannot dismiss this article, without giving to the Hanging Committee the praise to which they are clearly entitled, for the judicious manner in which they have distributed the pictures. In the principal room, in particular, some very excellent improvements have been made. It is, we understand, to the taste of Sir Francis Bourgeois the Academy is indebted for the commodious and elegant arrangements which have been made. The angles have been taken away, and the whole is converted into an irregular octagon, not very different from the disposition of the Galleries which, at Paris, display the treasures of the Italian, Flemish, and French schools.

It is impossible for us, with one hasty view, amidst the numberless objects which pressed upon our notice, to discriminate and do justice to the various works of prominent merit that enrich the Academy, but we shall hereafter proceed to consider them with due care and attention. We have, however, to regret that the Academy, with all the merit of the general display, has not put forth this year the whole of its strength. In the list of exhibitors, we do not find the names of Smirke, Gilpin, Farington, Daniell, and other esteemed Artists.

LAW INTELLIGENCE.

PALACE COURT.

DIXON v. BRADLEY.

This was an action brought by the plaintiff, to recover the sum of 18*l.* for a Dinner ordered by the Defendant.

The Plaintiff kept the Ship Tavern at Charing cross, where the Defendant was employed as a carpenter, to perform work to the amount of 131*l.* On finishing the same, the Plaintiff observed that it was proper the Defendant should subscribe towards a treat, which was consented to by the latter, on condition of contributing no more than 5*l.* Another tradesman who had also been employed about the premises, agreed to join in the expense, and the Dinner was accordingly given to no less than nineteen persons, who had been invited by the Plaintiff. The wine drank upon this occasion was two bottles per man; and brandy was furnished, with other articles, that made the entertainment a liberal one. The company were highly satisfied, and retired in the greatest spirits. Some time after Dinner the Defendant applied for his bill, and on finding the payment of the same refused, he arrested the Plaintiff and recovered the sum, at which time no set-off was pleaded respecting the charge of the Dinner, but immediately after, the present action was brought for the whole of the expense incurred upon that occasion. The evidence called, proved that the Defendant had agreed to pay no more than the 5*l.* afore-mentioned.

Mr. Serjeant Marshall said, the action was the most fraudulent and impudent one he had ever known, and directed the Jury to give their verdict for the Defendant; which they did without hesitation.

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE.

Messrs. Conrad and Co. booksellers of this city, have, among a great variety of new and curious books, imported a superb copy, of Hogarth restored, being a complete edition of the works of that much admired artist, by Thomas Cooke, engraver, in an imperial folio, which is the same style in which these moral and humorous plates were first exhibited to the world, accompanied with a volume of royal 8vo. of anecdotes of the artist, and explanatory descriptions of the plates. This is one of the finest specimens of the genius of an unrivalled comic painter we have ever witnessed, since the first proof impression of the plates. It it well worthy the attention of the amateurs.

The above named booksellers have just published "Narrative Poems," by M. D'Israeli. This is a neat edition of a performance which will not detract from the fame of a brilliant writer, whose prose and poetry are always marked by the brightest colours of imagination.

"The Marriage Promise," a new comedy, by Allingham, is advertised by Messrs. Conrads, and may be purchased by all the rational lovers of the Drama. Of the various modern comedies, perhaps this, with the exception of Cumberland's is one of the most pure. We understand from a gentleman of knowledge and taste, who witnessed its first representation, that it was very favourably received by the London critics; and in a closet-perusal it will repay the attention of an hour.

FOR THE PORT FOLIO.

ORIGINAL LETTERS

FROM DR. FRANKLIN, SILAS DEANE, ARTHUR LEE, &c.

[Continued.]

Paris, June 20, 1777.

We have had no arrivals since I had the pleasure of writing to you last, nor news but what comes by the way of England. The friends of government magnify, as usual, their advantages; you will see how impossible it is to guard all our extensive coast from incursions similar to that in Connecticut, yet I believe the reception they met with, and their narrow escape from total destruction, will sicken them of frequent trials of the same nature. The enemy begin, at length, to do justice to the bravery of our countrymen, and own that experienced commanders alone were wanting to have cut off their retreat. On our side we had only 260 continental troops in the action, the rest were militia, hastily assembled. It is very remarkable that hitherto the parts of the country where the king had most friends have most suffered. New-York, that loyal city, is half ruined, while Boston, that seat of d—d republicanism, as the courtiers stile it, grows rich by the war. Norfolk, in Virginia, contained more tories than the whole province beside. Norfolk is no more. The Jersies, where Howe boasted his numerous partizans, is now a desolated country. The last towns destroyed by British fury were the only two in the province which dissented from the resolutions of Congress. The visit of their *friends* has proved fatal. Many of the Americans killed, had Howe's protections in their pockets. General Wooster's son was killed, defending his father's body, having repeatedly refused proffered quarter. Seven of the country people, shut up in a house, from which they greatly annoyed the enemy, were surrounded, offered quarter, but chose rather to perish in the flames, than take it. Two fine young fellows, volunteers, of my acquaintance, fell, as I wish to fall. Young men of fortune, they acted as private men that day. Arnold having one horse killed under him, before he mounted another, fired his pistols, and then rode off to rally his men to another charge. You

may judge what warm work the enemy had by the quantity of cartridges used—sixty rounds, and by the march they made. It will be well to dress up these little circumstances for our good friends of Leyden, and the courier of the Bas-Rhine.

You have seen a letter said to be wrote by a Lieut. Col. Campbell, bitterly complaining of his cruel confinement. It is a forgery. A junto of refugees, from various parts of the continent, who meet weekly in Pall-Mall, London, do this dirty work of government, to earn the pittance but scantily afforded to each of them. At the head of this junto were Hutchinson, Cooper, Chandler, Vassel, and others, who would not be named but for their infamy. They have forged letters lately under the name of Gen. Washington, which the good silly souls of Europe will swallow as genuine, unless contradicted in different gazettes. In a New-York paper, published under the authority of general Howe, I saw an advertisement offering counterfeit continental currency to any one who would apply. This is one way of distressing an enemy, which was left to the ingenuity of our enemies to invent. Dr. Franklin mentions that it was badly counterfeited, or they would not have had the generosity to give it away. Mr. D. is not in town. As far as I can learn from America, the enemy have adopted another mode of conduct: they treat their prisoners more humanely, with a view, no doubt, of not exasperating a people too much, whom, if they do not conquer this summer, they mean to be united to in another way than formerly, by withdrawing their claims, and acknowledging their independence. Your European friends ought to foresee the probability of this, but they will not. They ought to remember we were forced into independence, and did not seek it; that many only came into the measure from necessity, not from inclination. The death of the present king of England, and a change of ministers might deprive France of an opportunity, the most glorious ever afforded her, of rising on the ruins of her rival. She has done enough to excite resentment, and not enough to secure gratitude. But 'surdis loquor.' Adieu, my dear sir, we have one thing left to comfort us, which is, if we secure our freedom, we shall owe it to ourselves only.

I am, dear sir,
Yours, most sincerely,
W. CARMICHAEL.

Mr. Dumas.

[*To be Continued.*]

DRAMA.

Delays and Blunders, a new play, of which the following are the characters, was lately brought out at the Theatre-Royal, Covent Garden:

Henry Sapling.....Mr. Lewis.
Sapling.....Mr. Munden.
Paul Postpone.....Mr. Fawcett.
Lieutenant St. Orme.....Mr. Siddons.
Sir Edward Delauny.....Mr. Murray.
Privilege.....Mr. Simmons.
Robert Grange.....Mr. Emery.
Honoria.....Mrs. H. Johnston.
Mrs. St. Orme.....Mrs. Litchfield.
Lauretta St. Orme.....Mrs. H. Siddons.
Mrs. Sapling.....Mrs. Mattocks.

A few words will explain the substance of the fable.—*Lieut. St. Orme*, conceiving himself deeply injured by his wife's father, urges him to a duel, in which the latter is wounded, and survives only a few months.—St. Orme is thrown into prison for the murder, and the scene opens with his daughter Lauretta coming to visit him.—She is seized by the prosecutor as being a material witness, but is rescued by Henry Sapling, who secrets her in male attire, in a farm-house.—Paul Postpone is the lawyer, who conducts the prosecution. He meets Privilege, an effeminate lounger, and summons him as a witness on the trial, conceiving him to be Lauretta in disguise.—From this blunder, and some delays, occasioned by the lawyer's propensity to pleasure, an acquittal ensues, and the piece derives its name.—Meanwhile Lauretta discovers her mother, Mrs. St. Orme, in the farm-house, in which she is confined under the false pretence of lunacy, by her kinsman Sir Edward Delauny, who possesses himself of her father's fortune. A reconciliation takes place between the lieutenant and his wife, whose affections had been alienated from him by false charges, and Sir Edward confesses that the death prosecuted as a murder, was a natural one.

This story affords in itself much light matter, arising principally from the whimsical character of the Lawyer, and it is still farther relieved by an underplot, made up of Sapling, an old country 'Squire, become a man of fashion to please his wife, a fine lady; of Honoria, his ward, with whom Young Sapling, the nephew, is in love, and Robert Grange, a Yorkshire clown, whose sister is a lady of the town, and the cause of groundless jealousy to Mrs. Sapling. The prologue was little more than an announcement of this piece as the production of Mr. Reynolds, by its allusion to The Dramatist, as one of many claims to the indulgence of the audience. That gentleman's productions have been censured as innovations upon legitimate Comedy, and not as holding the mirror up to nature, but distorting her features, and presenting nothing but deformity. There are dramatic as well as political Alarmists; and therefore it is not improbable but the danger in the present case is exaggerated. It would be difficult to state a modern instance of a comedy, critically good, that was well performed, and met with a cold reception.—So far is the stage from being in possession of Mr. Reynolds and Mr. Morton's plays, with all the popularity that deservedly belongs to some of them, the taste for pure and legitimate comedy is rapidly increasing.—Whether it be a farce of two acts, or a farce of five, there is nothing in the quality of the piece more injurious to public taste in the one case than in the other. If our royal artists should cease painting, are we to shut our eyes to an excellent caricature? So long as true dramatic talents withhold their exertions, we must be content with the best that offer, and reward their desire to please with a liberal patronage. It is not, therefore, fair to try the present, or any other production of the author, for they are all in the same manner, by the strict rules of the art. The unities of time and place, scenes regularly produced, incidents naturally arising, beauties of dialogue, truth of portraits, and excellence of style, are things which it would be preposterous and pedantic to dwell on. It would not only be pedantic, but unfair to censure the author for wanting those points to the possession of which he makes no pretensions. All that he aims at in the present piece, is to produce a picture, which shall prove interesting and diverting, regardless of how, where, or whence that effect is produced; and indifferent to the opinion of posterity, if his fame shall survive for a season. Trying Mr. Reynolds by this rule, and we cannot fairly use a more liberal one, his piece does not come up to it.—It is composed of the mere dregs of his muse, and unworthy of his former exertions.—Like all his pieces, it has frequent allusions to the fashions of the day; but the satire is seldom new or happy. The best hit is in the scene where Paul Postpone, with a double view to the bar and the stage, says few people clap the Declaration; but who ever thought of encoring a Bill in chancery?—This was received by the audience as a brilliant idea, and was certainly not equalled by any thing in the remainder of the scene, which says that people never applaud at the Opera but once, and then with joy, because it is over: that it is a pity fine instruments cannot be substituted for fine voices, to which it is the fashion to compare them, as then there would not be so many disappointed from hoarsness, &c.; and concluding with a compliment, to one of Mr. Dibdin's operas.—These flashes were, no doubt, struck from the exuberance of spirits, without any illiberal motive.—The author could not have intended the compliment as a stimulus to extraordinary exertion in his favour.—With the exception of Paul Postpone, all the other characters are mere sketches. To personate them, requires no labour, no study, no powers of discrimination. Performers will, therefore, be always zealous in parts in which they have least trouble; and to excel in which, they have only to make themselves as ridiculous as they can look, or to pronounce a few declamatory serious sentences. It must be confessed, however, that the appearances of the night, were not in conformity with this opinion. The applause was very loud, and very general, and the male-contents, however numerous, were not very forward in expressing their disapprobation.—Mrs. Litchfield and Mr. H. Siddons, in Mrs. and Mr. St. Orme, have scarcely any thing to do. The most interesting part of Mrs. H. Siddon's performance, in Lauretta, is a pretty plaintive air, which she executed with taste; and as for Honoria, it affords no room whatever for exertion. Robin Grange appears to have been introduced merely as embellishment to shew the talents of Emery in the simple rustic; and the whole merit of Saplin consists in the ludicrous transformation of Mr. Munden into a Bond street Lounger. Mr. Lewis was a dashing sprightly Naval Officer. His entree, the first since his indisposition, was greeted with intense applause, of the value of which he seemed fully sensible. The Epilogue, well spoken by Mrs. Mattocks, turned upon ballooons and the rage for visiting France; but as it contained no good points and many unsuccessful attempts, we should presume it does not come from Mr. M. P. Andrews, its reputed author. The piece was very attractive. The house overflowed long before the curtain rose.—The following are the words of the air sung by Mrs. H. Siddons:

SONG.

Once happy in a peaceful home,
Of fortune's gifts I ask'd no other;
A prison's now my father's doom,
And say, oh! say, where art thou, mother!

If thou hast press'd a luckless bier,
Of victim death, oh! take another;
Or if immur'd in cavern dear,
Boldly I'll fly to save my mother.

MISCELLANEOUS PARAGRAPHS.

FOR THE PORT FOLIO.

Dr. Aikin, in a Biography of one of the Russian empresses, thus gives his opinion on *Punishments*. Possibly, it may be called correct even by a *Pennsylvanian*.

She displayed the natural humanity of her temper by a vow, which she made on her accession, never to inflict a capital punishment for any crime, whatsoever; but by this she did more honour to her intentions than to her judgment; for as it was impossible that in so vast an empire, and such a depravation of morals, great crimes should not often be perpetrated, her resolution only substituted perpetual imprisonment in dungeons, exile in the remotest deserts, and the knout, with all its horrors; to immediate death often a much more merciful doom.

The servant of Clanronald, who fell at Sheriffmuir, being interrogated next day, as he lay watching the body, who that was, answered, "he was a man yesterday."

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A farmer's son in Col, one of the remotest islands among the Hebrides, goes yearly on foot to Aberdeen, for education, and in summer returns, and acts as a schoolmaster. Dr. Johnson said, there is something noble in a young man's walking two hundred miles, and back again every year, for the sake of learning.

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Dr. Johnson once socially said to Boswell, "you are like some *New-Englandmen*, who come to the mouth of the Thames, 'come,' said they, 'let us go up and see what sort of inhabitants there are here." They talked as if they had been to go up the *Susquehannah*, or any other *American* river.

—

Charles II. a few days before or after his concealment in the oak, happened to seek refuge in the farm house, the mistress of which dressed him like a clown, and set him to turn the spit.—His pursuers having an idea of his being in the premises, examined them very closely, and in their search entered the kitchen. On their approach Charles looked round; which the protectress observing, she seized the basting ladle, and with it gave the king a severe blow on the back, saying to him, very angrily, "and what do you stare at you dog you; why don't you mind what you are about?" This reprimand furnished him with a pretext for keeping his eyes fixed downwards upon the spit; which attitude, together with the flouncing hat, effectually concealed him from the recognizance of his enemies.

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In memory of T. T. a grenadier in the northern battalion of Hampshire militia, who died of a fever, contracted by drinking small beer.

Here lies an honest Hampshire grenadier,
Who kill'd himself by drinking cold small-beer:
Soldier! be warn'd by his untimely fall,
And, when you're hot, drink strong, or none at all.

—

A Spaniard and a Gascon met together at the same inn in France, and both ordered suppers; the hostess told them she had a nice piece of mutton and a partridge. Each wished to have the latter dish, which was just ready for table. As they were on the point of quarrelling, the hostess, to reconcile them, told them, as she really had but one partridge, unless they agreed to eat together, there was no way to content them; but if you will take my advice, added she, do without it to night, and to morrow morning, he who has had the finest dream shall be entitled to it; in the meantime, you may make an excellent repast on mutton and sallad. The plan was agreed to: the parties supped, and went to bed. The Gascon, however, had watched where the partridge was put, got up in the night, and eat it. The Spaniard passed the night in fabricating a fine dream, for the next day. When they met in the morning, the Spaniard hastened to inform the hostess that he had had a magnificent dream, having seen the heavens opened, and been received by the angelic choir into the realms of glory. *You* could not, said he to the other, have had a finer dream."...." I saw you enter Paradise," answered the Gascon, " and as I concluded you *would never return....I eat the partridge.*"

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The following is extracted from a publication of the late Reverend Dr. William Smith, entitled " the College of Mirania," first printed in 1753, and is considered not inapplicable to the present time. It is the concluding part of his charge to the first graduates, and proves that even at that early period, it was not only proper, but necessary to guard against the attempts, however puny, of the enemies of religion and good government.

" But some things there are, nevertheless, which will demand your most vigilant attention; and some occasions, when to be silent or consenting would be a criminal resignation of every pretention to virtue or manhood.

" Should your country call, or should you perceive the restless tools of faction at work in their dark cabals, and plotting against the sacred interests of liberty; should you see the *corrupters* or *corrupted* imposing upon the public with specious names, undermining the *civil* and *religious* principles of their country, and gradually paving the way to certain slavery by spreading destructive notions of government—then, Oh! then, be nobly roused! Be all eye, and ear, and heart, and voice, and hand, in a cause so glorious! " Cry aloud and spare not," fearless of danger, undaunted by opposition, and little regardful of the frowns of *power* or the machinations of *villainy*."

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From the harshness of many of Milton's, it was for a long time a settled opinion among the learned that Sonnets were a species of poetical manufacture not easily wrought in the English loom, though of such smooth and exquisite fabric, when imported from Italy. Charlotte Smith and her followers have done much to convince us of the erroneousness of this opinion. But the Rev. W. L. Bowles has fully vindicated the power of our language to express, by every flexible and harmonious phrase, all that this irregular mode of poetry demands. His sonnet to Hope is a fine example:

As one, who, long by wasting sickness worn,
Weary has watch'd the lingering night, and heard
Heartless the carol of the matin bird
Salute his lonely porch, now first at morn
Goes forth, leaving his melancholy bed;
He the green slope, and level meadow views,
Delightful bath'd with slow ascending dews;
Or marks the clouds that o'er the mountain's head
In varying forms fantastic wander white;
Or turns his ear to every random song,
Heard the green river's winding marge along,
The while each sense is steep'd in still delight;
With such delight, on all my heart I feel,
Sweet Hope! thy fragrance pure, and healing incense steal.

—

London Theatrics....Among the dramatic novelties of the day, we find the following notice of a recent production, in a London paper.

Love laughs at lock-smiths.

Colman's very judicious and pleasant adaptation of this piece from the French, was last night performed for a second time with loud and reiterated plaudits; and it may be ranked as one of our favourite stock-pieces, which will afford many a happy hour to the present and future generations. —It is as pretty and attractive a two-act opera as we have for many years witnessed. Besides the powerful auxiliary of music, it has a very lively, and in many places, a witty dialogue. We regret that we have neither time nor room to particularise the various poetical beauties of the airs; but we cannot bestow on the writer an greater encomium than saying, that as he has successfully aimed at the language of the heart, the superstructure which he has raised for himself will long survive the gaudy and feeble compositions of the day, which are scarcely brought into publicity, before they relapse into their original insignificance, and rapidly terminate their momentary career in contempt and oblivion.

Among the novelties of this opera, the song about the *Ghost* of *Miss Bailey* deserves particular notice. It is a very happy way of ridiculing the absurd notion of spectres and hobgoblins, frequently rendered terrific to children by the foolish and culpable stories of nurses and old women.

SONG.

TUNE—'ALLY CROAKER.'

A Captain bold, in Halifax, that dwelt in country quarters,
Seduc'd a maid, who hang'd herself, one Monday in her garters;
His wicked conscience smited him; he lost his stomach daily,
He took to drinking ratafia, and thought upon Miss Bailey!
Oh, Miss Bailey; unfortunate Miss Bailey!

One night betimes, he went to bed, for he had caught a fever;
Says he, 'I am a handsome man, but I'm a gay deceiver.'
His candle just at twelve o'clock, began to burn quite palely;
A ghost stepped up to his bed side, and said, 'Behold Miss Bailey!'
Oh, Miss Bailey! &c.

'Avaunt, Miss Bailey!' then he cried, 'your face looks white and mealy.'
'Dear Captain Smith,' the Ghost replied, 'you've used me ungenteely.
'The Crowner's Quest goes hard with me because I've acted frailly:
'And parson Biggs won't bury me, though I am dead Miss Bailey.
Oh, Miss Bailey, &c.

'Dear Corpse,' says he, 'since you and I, accounts must once for all close,
'I've got a One Pound Note within my regimental small clothes,
''Twill bribe the Sexton for your grave—' The Ghost then vanish'd gaily,
Crying, 'Bless, you, wicked Captain Smith! remember poor Miss Bailey!'
Oh, Miss Bailey, unfortunate Miss Bailey.

—

A VIRGINIA LEGISLATOR.

Between two dogs, which hath the deepest mouth,
Between two horses, which doth bear him best
Between two girls, which hath the merriest eye,
I have, perhaps, some shallow spirit of judgment:
But in your nice sharp quillets of the law,
Good faith, I am no wiser than a daw.

TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

'Touchstone' is a wag, who saucily sneers from his *SHAKSPEARE* at the faded and loquacious vestal. We advise this imprudent wit not to venture himself among the decayed maidens. They certainly will punish his temerity. They will blacken both his reputation and face, and burn his wig as well as his verses.

'Mercutio' is not only such a favourite with his friend, the Editor, but with a very respectable portion of the public, that a sprightly sally of a fancy, gay like his, would be gladly perused in *every* number of our miscellany.

A late essay, in the Lounger, with the signature of 'Eugenius,' for which the Editor believes he is indebted to a very youthful friend, has so much attraction, that the writer will not be disregarded whenever he chooses to speculate again.

A 'Censor of the stile of Mr. Moore,' the translator of Anacreon, we suspect is some outrageous prude in disguise. The Editor knows how to appreciate this hypocritical cant, so prostituted in America. He recommends to the attention of his correspondent the following lines from Young:

Unmarry'd Abra puts on formal airs,
Her cushion's threadbare with her constant prayers,
Her only grief is that she cannot be
At once engag'd in prayer and charity—
And this, to do her justice, must be said,
Who would not think that Abra was a maid?

The Editor would wish to receive a file of the London 'Courier,' for the last six months.

may judge what warm work the enemy had by the quantity of cartridges used—sixty rounds, and by the march they made. It will be well to dress up these little circumstances for our good friends of Leyden, and the courier of the Bas-Rhine.

You have seen a letter said to be wrote by a Lieut. Col. Campbell, bitterly complaining of his cruel confinement. It is a forgery. A junto of refugees, from various parts of the continent, who meet weekly in Pall-Mall, London, do this dirty work of government, to earn the pittance but scantily afforded to each of them. At the head of this junto were Hutchinson, Cooper, Chandler, Vassel, and others, who would not be named but for their infamy. They have forged letters lately under the name of Gen. Washington, which the good silly souls of Europe will swallow as genuine, unless contradicted in different gazettes. In a New-York paper, published under the authority of general Howe, I saw an advertisement offering counterfeit continental currency to any one who would apply. This is one way of distressing an enemy, which was left to the ingenuity of our enemies to invent. Dr. Franklin mentions that it was badly counterfeited, or they would not have had the generosity to give it away. Mr. D. is not in town. As far as I can learn from America, the enemy have adopted another mode of conduct: they treat their prisoners more humanely, with a view, no doubt, of not exasperating a people too much, whom, if they do not conquer this summer, they mean to be united to in another way than formerly, by withdrawing their claims, and acknowledging their independence. Your European friends ought to foresee the probability of this, but they will not. They ought to remember we were forced into independence, and did not seek it; that many only came into the measure from necessity, not from inclination. The death of the present king of England, and a change of ministers might deprive France of an opportunity, the most glorious ever afforded her, of rising on the ruins of her rival. She has done enough to excite resentment, and not enough to secure gratitude. But 'surdis loquor.' Adieu, my dear sir, we have one thing left to comfort us, which is, if we secure our freedom, we shall owe it to ourselves only.

I am, dear sir,
Yours, most sincerely,
W. CARMICHAEL.

Mr. Dumas.

[*To be Continued.*]

DRAMA.

Delays and Blunders, a new play, of which the following are the characters, was lately brought out at the Theatre-Royal, Covent Garden:

Henry Sapling.....Mr. Lewis.
Sapling.....Mr. Munden.
Paul Postpone.....Mr. Fawcett.
Lieutenant St. Orme.....Mr. Siddons.
Sir Edward Delauny.....Mr. Murray.
Privilege.....Mr. Simmons.
Robert Grange.....Mr. Emery.
Honoria.....Mrs. H. Johnston.
Mrs. St. Orme.....Mrs. Litchfield.
Lauretta St. Orme.....Mrs. H. Siddons.
Mrs. Sapling.....Mrs. Mattocks.

A few words will explain the substance of the fable.—*Lieut. St. Orme*, conceiving himself deeply injured by his wife's father, urges him to a duel, in which the latter is wounded, and survives only a few months.—St. Orme is thrown into prison for the murder, and the scene opens with his daughter Lauretta coming to visit him.—She is seized by the prosecutor as being a material witness, but is rescued by Henry Sapling, who secrets her in male attire, in a farm-house.—Paul Postpone is the lawyer, who conducts the prosecution. He meets Privilege, an effeminate lounger, and summons him as a witness on the trial, conceiving him to be Lauretta in disguise.—From this blunder, and some delays, occasioned by the lawyer's propensity to pleasure, an acquittal ensues, and the piece derives its name.—Meanwhile Lauretta discovers her mother, Mrs. St. Orme, in the farm-house, in which she is confined under the false pretence of lunacy, by her kinsman Sir Edward Delauny, who possesses himself of her father's fortune. A reconciliation takes place between the lieutenant and his wife, whose affections had been alienated from him by false charges, and Sir Edward confesses that the death prosecuted as a murder, was a natural one.

This story affords in itself much light matter, arising principally from the whimsical character of the Lawyer, and it is still farther relieved by an underplot, made up of Sapling, an old country 'Squire, become a man of fashion to please his wife, a fine lady; of Honoria, his ward, with whom Young Sapling, the nephew, is in love, and Robert Grange, a Yorkshire clown, whose sister is a lady of the town, and the cause of groundless jealousy to Mrs. Sapling. The prologue was little more than an announcement of this piece as the production of Mr. Reynolds, by its allusion to The Dramatist, as one of many claims to the indulgence of the audience. That gentleman's productions have been censured as innovations upon legitimate Comedy, and not as holding the mirror up to nature, but distorting her features, and presenting nothing but deformity. There are dramatic as well as political Alarmists; and therefore it is not improbable but the danger in the present case is exaggerated. It would be difficult to state a modern instance of a comedy, critically good, that was well performed, and met with a cold reception.—So far is the stage from being in possession of Mr. Reynolds and Mr. Morton's plays, with all the popularity that deservedly belongs to some of them, the taste for pure and legitimate comedy is rapidly increasing.—Whether it be a farce of two acts, or a farce of five, there is nothing in the quality of the piece more injurious to public taste in the one case than in the other. If our royal artists should cease painting, are we to shut our eyes to an excellent caricature? So long as true dramatic talents withhold their exertions, we must be content with the best that offer, and reward their desire to please with a liberal patronage. It is not, therefore, fair to try the present, or any other production of the author, for they are all in the same manner, by the strict rules of the art. The unities of time and place, scenes regularly produced, incidents naturally arising, beauties of dialogue, truth of portraits, and excellence of style, are things which it would be preposterous and pedantic to dwell on. It would not only be pedantic, but unfair to censure the author for wanting those points to the possession of which he makes no pretensions. All that he aims at in the present piece, is to produce a picture, which shall prove interesting and diverting, regardless of how, where, or whence that effect is produced; and indifferent to the opinion of posterity, if his fame shall survive for a season. Trying Mr. Reynolds by this rule, and we cannot fairly use a more liberal one, his piece does not come up to it.—It is composed of the mere dregs of his muse, and unworthy of his former exertions.—Like all his pieces, it has frequent allusions to the fashions of the day; but the satire is seldom new or happy. The best hit is in the scene where Paul Postpone, with a double view to the bar and the stage, says few people clap the Declaration; but who ever thought of encoring a Bill in chancery?—This was received by the audience as a brilliant idea, and was certainly not equalled by any thing in the remainder of the scene, which says that people never applaud at the Opera but once, and then with joy, because it is over: that it is a pity fine instruments cannot be substituted for fine voices, to which it is the fashion to compare them, as then there would not be so many disappointed from hoarseness, &c.; and concluding with a compliment, to one of Mr. Dibdin's operas.—These flashes were, no doubt, struck from the exuberance of spirits, without any illiberal motive.—The author could not have intended the compliment as a stimulus to extraordinary exertion in his favour.—With the exception of Paul Postpone, all the other characters are mere sketches. To personate them, requires no labour, no study, no powers of discrimination. Performers will, therefore, be always zealous in parts in which they have least trouble; and to excel in which, they have only to make themselves as ridiculous as they can look, or to pronounce a few declamatory serious sentences. It must be confessed, however, that the appearances of the night, were not in conformity with this opinion. The applause was very loud, and very general, and the male-contents, however numerous, were not very forward in expressing their disapprobation.—Mrs. Litchfield and Mr. H. Siddons, in Mrs. and Mr. St. Orme, have scarcely any thing to do. The most interesting part of Mrs. H. Siddon's performance, in Lauretta, is a pretty plaintive air, which she executed with taste; and as for Honoria, it affords no room whatever for exertion. Robin Grange appears to have been introduced merely as embellishment to shew the talents of Emery in the simple rustic; and the whole merit of Saplin consists in the ludicrous transformation of Mr. Munden into a Bond street Lounger. Mr. Lewis was a dashing sprightly Naval Officer. His entree, the first since his indisposition, was greeted with intense applause, of the value of which he seemed fully sensible. The Epilogue, well spoken by Mrs. Mattocks, turned upon balloons and the rage for visiting France; but as it contained no good points and many unsuccessful attempts, we should presume it does not come from Mr. M. P. Andrews, its reputed author. The piece was very attractive. The house overflowed long before the curtain rose.—The following are the words of the air sung by Mrs. H. Siddons:

SONG.

Once happy in a peaceful home,
Of fortune's gifts I ask'd no other;
A prison's now my father's doom,
And say, oh! say, where art thou, mother!

If thou hast press'd a luckless bier,
Of victim death, oh! take another;
Or if immur'd in cavern dear,
Boldly I'll fly to save my mother.

MISCELLANEOUS PARAGRAPHS.

FOR THE PORT FOLIO.

Dr. Aikin, in a Biography of one of the Russian empresses, thus gives his opinion on *Punishments*. Possibly, it may be called correct even by a *Pennsylvanian*.

She displayed the natural humanity of her temper by a vow, which she made on her accession, never to inflict a capital punishment for any crime, whatsoever; but by this she did more honour to her intentions than to her judgment; for as it was impossible that in so vast an empire, and such a depravation of morals, great crimes should not often be perpetrated, her resolution only substituted perpetual imprisonment in dungeons, exile in the remotest deserts, and the knout, with all its horrors; to immediate death often a much more merciful doom.

The servant of Clanronald, who fell at Sheriffmuir, being interrogated next day, as he lay watching the body, who that was, answered, "he was a man yesterday."

—

A farmer's son in Col, one of the remotest islands among the Hebrides, goes yearly on foot to Aberdeen, for education, and in summer returns, and acts as a schoolmaster. Dr. Johnson said, there is something noble in a young man's walking two hundred miles, and back again every year, for the sake of learning.

—

Dr. Johnson once socially said to Boswell, "you are like some *New-Englandmen*, who come to the mouth of the Thames, 'come,' said they, 'let us go up and see what sort of inhabitants there are here." They talked as if they had been to go up the *Susquehannah*, or any other *American* river.

—

Charles II. a few days before or after his concealment in the oak, happened to seek refuge in the farm house, the mistress of which dressed him like a clown, and set him to turn the spit.—His pursuers having an idea of his being in the premises, examined them very closely, and in their search entered the kitchen. On their approach Charles looked round; which the protectress observing, she seized the basting ladle, and with it gave the king a severe blow on the back, saying to him, very angrily, "and what do you stare at you dog you; why don't you mind what you are about?" This reprimand furnished him with a pretext for keeping his eyes fixed downwards upon the spit; which attitude, together with the flouncing hat, effectually concealed him from the recognizance of his enemies.

—

In memory of T. T. a grenadier in the northern battalion of Hampshire militia, who died of a fever, contracted by drinking small beer.

Here lies an honest Hampshire grenadier,
Who kill'd himself by drinking cold small-beer:
Soldier! be warn'd by his untimely fall,
And, when you're hot, drink strong, or none at all.

—

A Spaniard and a Gascon met together at the same inn in France, and both ordered suppers; the hostess told them she had a nice piece of mutton and a partridge. Each wished to have the latter dish, which was just ready for table. As they were on the point of quarrelling, the hostess, to reconcile them, told them, as she really had but one partridge, unless they agreed to eat together, there was no way to content them; but if you will take my advice, added she, do without it to night, and to morrow morning, he who has had the finest dream shall be entitled to it; in the meantime, you may make an excellent repast on mutton and sallad. The plan was agreed to: the parties supped, and went to bed. The Gascon, however, had watched where the partridge was put, got up in the night, and eat it. The Spaniard passed the night in fabricating a fine dream, for the next day. When they met in the morning, the Spaniard hastened to inform the hostess that he had had a magnificent dream, having seen the heavens opened, and been received by the angelic choir into the realms of glory. *You* could not, said he to the other, have had a finer dream."...." I saw you enter Paradise," answered the Gascon, "and as I concluded you *would never return....I eat the partridge.*"

—

The following is extracted from a publication of the late Reverend Dr. William Smith, entitled "the College of Mirania," first printed in 1753, and is considered not inapplicable to the present time. It is the concluding part of his charge to the first graduates, and proves that even at that early period, it was not only proper, but necessary to guard against the attempts, however puny, of the enemies of religion and good government.

"But some things there are, nevertheless, which will demand your most vigilant attention; and some occasions, when to be silent or consenting would be a criminal resignation of every pretention to virtue or manhood.

"Should your country call, or should you perceive the restless tools of faction at work in their dark cabals, and plotting against the sacred interests of liberty; should you see the *corrupters* or *corrupted* imposing upon the public with specious names, undermining the *civil* and *religious* principles of their country, and gradually paving the way to certain slavery by spreading destructive notions of government—then, Oh! then, be nobly roused! Be all eye, and ear, and heart, and voice, and hand, in a cause so glorious! "Cry aloud and spare not," fearless of danger, undaunted by opposition, and little regardful of the frowns of *power* or the machinations of *villainy*."

—

From the harshness of many of Milton's, it was for a long time a settled opinion among the learned that Sonnets were a species of poetical manufacture not easily wrought in the English loom, though of such smooth and exquisite fabric, when imported from Italy. Charlotte Smith and her followers have done much to convince us of the erroneousness of this opinion. But the Rev. W. L. Bowles has fully vindicated the power of our language to express, by every flexible and harmonious phrase, all that this irregular mode of poetry demands. His sonnet to Hope is a fine example:

As one, who, long by wasting sickness worn,
Weary has watch'd the lingering night, and heard
Heartless the carol of the matin bird
Salute his lonely porch, now first at morn
Goes forth, leaving his melancholy bed;
He the green slope, and level meadow views,
Delightful bath'd with slow ascending dews;
Or marks the clouds that o'er the mountain's head
In varying forms fantastic wander white;
Or turns his ear to every random song,
Heard the green river's winding marge along,
The while each sense is steep'd in still delight;
With such delight, on all my heart I feel,
Sweet Hope! thy fragrance pure, and healing incense steal.

—

London Theatrics....Among the dramatic novelties of the day, we find the following notice of a recent production, in a London paper.

Love laughs at lock-smiths.

Colman's very judicious and pleasant adaptation of this piece from the French, was last night performed for a second time with loud and reiterated plaudits; and it may be ranked as one of our favourite stock-pieces, which will afford many a happy hour to the present and future generations.—It is as pretty and attractive a two-act opera as we have for many years witnessed. Besides the powerful auxiliary of music, it has a very lively, and in many places, a witty dialogue. We regret that we have neither time nor room to particularise the various poetical beauties of the airs; but we cannot bestow on the writer an greater encomium than saying, that as he has successfully aimed at the language of the heart, the superstructure which he has raised for himself will long survive the gaudy and feeble compositions of the day, which are scarcely brought into publicity, before they relapse into their original insignificance, and rapidly terminate their momentary career in contempt and oblivion.

Among the novelties of this opera, the song about the *Ghost* of *Miss Bailey* deserves particular notice. It is a very happy way of ridiculing the absurd notion of spectres and hobgoblins, frequently rendered terrific to children by the foolish and culpable stories of nurses and old women.

SONG.

TUNE—'ALLY CROAKER.'

A Captain bold, in Halifax, that dwelt in country quarters,
Seduc'd a maid, who hang'd herself, one Monday in her garters;
His wicked conscience smited him; he lost his stomach daily,
He took to drinking ratafia, and thought upon Miss Bailey!
Oh, Miss Bailey; unfortunate Miss Bailey!

One night betimes, he went to bed, for he had caught a fever;
Says he, 'I am a handsome man, but I'm a gay deceiver.'
His candle just at twelve o'clock, began to burn quite palely;
A ghost stepped up to his bed side, and said, 'Behold Miss Bailey!'
Oh, Miss Bailey! &c.

'Avaunt, Miss Bailey!' then he cried, 'your face looks white and mealy.'
'Dear Captain Smith,' the Ghost replied, 'you've used me ungenteely.
'The Crowner's Quest goes hard with me because I've acted frailly:
'And parson Biggs won't bury me, though I am dead Miss Bailey.
Oh, Miss Bailey, &c.

'Dear Corpse,' says he, 'since you and I, accounts must once for all close,
'I've got a One Pound Note within my regimental small clothes,
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Crying, 'Bless, you, wicked Captain Smith! remember poor Miss Bailey!'
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Between two horses, which doth bear him best
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And this, to do her justice, must be said,
Who would not think that Abra was a maid?

The Editor would wish to receive a file of the London 'Courier,' for the last six months.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

FOR THE PORT FOLIO.

ODE TO FORTUNE.

Hail! ruler blind of *ups and downs*,
Who lov'st to tear from kings their crowns,
And fix them oft at voice of mobs,
On worthless beggars' empty *nobs!*
The quaint attorney thee invokes,
To stir up suits 'twixt *Stiles* and *Nokes;*
For benefices thee implore
Crave deacons, who ne'er pray'd before;
Thee the physician warmly teazes
For golden harvests of diseases;
The *sub*, ambitious of promotion,
Solicits war, and dire commotion!
Gammer, thou'rt blinder than a mole!
Methinks thee *deaf* too by my soul!
Did'st never hear the neighbours talk
Of slippery *Tom?* that noted gawk,
Who from rough Tarleton ran away,
And lives to *run* another day;
Who, greatly daring, *colour* waves,
In fornication with his slaves!
Who play'd on *Jones* the cunning caper
Of borrowing *gold*, and paying *paper*.
What talent boasts this biped's brain
To sponge his heart of every stain?
Through *telescopes* can he discover
The ills that o'er our country hover;
Can he, by *algebra* or *fluxions*,
Draw political *deductions;*
Can he, by *geometric* skill,
Prove why he negatives a bill;
Can he, by *lever, screw,* or *weight*,
Increase the *power* of the state;
Does he, though great his *chemic* art is,
Neutralize the salt of parties;
Or can he, though all own his might
At **chess*, lead *armies* to the fight?
Ah, no! 'twas thy caprice alone,
Thou foolish, fickle, fusty crone,
Or haply 'twas thy wanton joke,
That bor'd us with this man of *smoke!*
Though poor, yet would I blush to whine,
And cringe before thy chequer'd shrine!
When *demos* rule, in times like these,
The state, and mould it as they please,
When *Faction* in her vortex draws
The constitution and the laws,
When sink the virtuous, wise, and brave,
While honours gild the fool and knave,
I'll live, remote from civic crowns,
And die *distinguish'd* by thy frowns!

—

MERCUTIO.

FOR THE PORT FOLIO.

Full fifteen years
Of sighs and tears
Had Richard pass'd in wedlock's ties,
Chain'd to a shrew, a scolding wife,
He still look'd out, with eager eyes,
To catch some comfort in a tedious life.
Year after year, day pass'd on after day,
While Richard heav'd no thoughtless pray'r
That God would give him and his wealth an heir;
At least, if this denied, would take his wife away—
Quoth Richard, 'to a husband's pray'rs *sincere*,
Kind Heaven may listen with attentive ear,
Old Abraham waited till his hundredth year
Ere Heaven had given to him an heir'—
Thus Richard solac'd him, till heaven prov'd kind,
And sent an heir, to cheer his anxious mind.
Now to the chamber dark, by dozens,
Come old maids, gossips, aunts, and cousins,
While Richard, pacing o'er the parlour floor,
Heard a loud knocking at the outer door—
No doubt, some friend had come to greet him,
And Richard hasten'd out to meet him,
Hopp'd o'er the floor,
Unlatch'd the door:
The stranger nodded, 'sir, I want to know
If Mr. Lee live here or no?'
'Pray, sir,' said Richard, with a smiling face,
And waving slow his hand with easy grace,
'Pray, sir, which of them do you wish to see,
Is it *old* Mr. Lee, or the *young* Mr. Lee?'

PINDAR.

* The analogy between warlike evolutions, and the manœuvres of chess, is well known: the great man's attachment to this game may proceed from the wish to acquire experience in the military art, without encountering the *risks* by which such experience is generally bought.

SELECTED POETRY.

DIALOGUE

Between Buonaparte and Talleyrand.

Buonaparte.

Talleyrand, what's the state of my great preparation,
To crush, at one stroke, the vile, insolent nation,
That baffles my projects, my vengeance derides,
Blasts all my proud hopes, checks my arrogant strides,
Boasts a press unrestrain'd, points its censure at *me*,
And while Frenchmen are slaves, still presumes to be free?

Talleyrand.

In a month, Sire, or less, your magnanimous host
Their standard shall fix on the rude British coast.

Buonaparte.

'Tis well—let my troops be kept hungry and bare,
To make them more keen—for that island's good fare.
Give them *drafts upon London*, instead of their pay,
And rouse them to ravish, burn, plunder, and slay.
Prepare, too—some *draughts*, for the sick and the lame;
You know what I mean—

Talleyrand....As in Syria?

Buonaparte....The same.

That England I hate, and, its armies subdued,
The *slaughter of Jaffa* will here be renew'd.
Not a wretch, that presumes to oppose, but shall feel
The flames of my fury, the force of my steel.
Their daughters and wives to my troops I consign;
So shall vengeance, sweet vengeance, deep glutted be mine.
Their children—

Talleyrand.

What, massacre them, my dear Lord?

Buonaparte.

Why not? With me *pity* was *never the word!*
That island once conquer'd, the world is my own,
And its ruins shall furnish the base of my throne.

Talleyrand.

What a project! how vast!—yet allow me a word;
Sir, the English are brave, and wield well the sword;
In defence of their freedom, their King, and their soil,
Not a man but will dare the most perilous toil.
Should our troops but appear, they will rush to the field,
And will die on the spot to a man ere they yield.
In defence of their honour, their women will fight,
And their navy, triumpant, still sails in our sight.

Buonaparte.

Hush, hush, say no more, lest some list'ner should hear,
And our troops should be taught these fierce Britons to fear.
They're brave; and my soldiers have felt it—what then?
Our numbers are more, to their five we are ten.
Say their sailors are skilful, oak-hearted, and true,
One army may fail, yet another may do.
And though thousands should fatten the sharks in the sea,
There are thousands remaining—*to perish for me.*
In a night, or a fog, we will silent steal over,
And surprise, unexpected, the castle of Dover.
Then, to gull the poor dupes of that navy-bound land,
You have lies ready coin'd—*'tis your trade*—at command;
We will tell them, and swear it, our sole end and aim
Is to make them all equally rich—all the same.
I see, by your smile, you interpret my meaning,
That where'er my troops reap, they leave nothing for gleaning.
They soar at a palace, they stoop at a cot,
And plunder—not leaving one bone for the pot.
Now, sir, to your duty, your business prepare,
Leave the rest to *my* genius, *my* fortune, *my* care.

[*Exit Buonaparte, Talleyrand looking after him.*

Talleyrand.

Your fortune, I fear, sir, will play you a trick:—
Notwithstanding his vaunts, he is touch'd to the quick.
What folly! what madness, this project inspires,
To conquer a nation, whom liberty fires.
Even now from their shores, loudly echoed, I hear
The song of defiance appalling mine ear.
Their spirit once rous'd, what destruction awakes?
What vengeance the wretched invaders o'ertakes!
Prophetic I plead, but my warning is vain,
Ambition still urges, and maddens his brain:
Fir'd with hopes of rich booty, his soldiers all burn,
They may go, some may land, but not one will return.

—

BUONAPARTE'S SOLILOQUY AT CALAIS.

To go, or not to go, that is the question;
Whether 'tis better for my views to suffer
The ease and quiet of yon hated rival,
Or to take arms against the haughty people,
And, by invading, end them. T'invade, to fight,
No more; and by a fight to say we end
The envy and the thousand jealous pangs
We now must bear with—'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To invade, to fight—
To fight—perchance to beat; aye, there's the rub!
For in our passage hence what ills may come
When we have parted from our native ports,
Must give us pause. There's the respect
That makes the alternative of so hard choice;
For who would bear their just and equal laws,
Their sacred faith, and general happiness,
Should shew in contrast black our tyrant sway,
Our frequent breach of treaty, and the harms
Devouring armies on the people bring,
When he himself could the dark shame remove
By mere invasion? Who would tamely view
That happy nation's great and thriving power;
But that the dread of falling on their coast,
(That firm and loyal country, from whose shores
No enemy returns) puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience* does make cowards of us all:
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;
And enterprises of great pith and moment,
With this regard, their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.

* Alluding probably to Egypt.

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